

Remarks by Ambassador Costos
Welcome Reception for Capital Group
October 9, 2014

Good afternoon everyone. Welcome. Welcome Capital Group to the U.S. Embassy and welcome to Madrid. As the U.S. Ambassador to Spain, I'm always delighted when an American company opens its doors here in Spain. We all know you have been a long term investor in Spanish companies such as Inditex, Santander, BBVA, LaCaixa and Telefonica, some of which are here tonight. The opening of this Madrid office represents a further commitment to Spain – to be part of the local community here. And we all welcome you tonight!

I want to note that while Capital Group is now a highly respected global company, it was once just a small office 85 years ago in Los Angeles, California with a handful of employees. It was a business started by entrepreneurs. And I'm sure a very similar story can be told for a lot of the businesses that are here this evening – every business is started by people with a vision and a commitment to make that vision a reality.

That is why I want to take a moment to discuss one of our government's top priorities – not just in Spain but around Europe and across the world – and that is promoting entrepreneurship. Because an idea today can, with the right climate and the right policies, become a business tomorrow. This is why the United States strongly believes that entrepreneurship can empower young people with a pathway to success.

When I was nominated to be Ambassador in 2013, it was a very challenging economic time in Europe, especially Spain. Although market indicators are moving in the right direction and Spanish government reforms are beginning to boost economic growth, we know that more work

needs to be done. We need more work on policies to reduce unemployment and encourage entrepreneurs. There are too many barriers to entry in Spain, twice as many procedures and it takes twice as much time to start a business in Spain. Yet despite these conditions, the financial crisis has led many in Spain to begin to adopt a new entrepreneurial mindset.

This new mindset recognizes that one cannot depend on a government safety net or a job for life at a big company anymore. It's a mindset, often associated with the United States, which strongly values innovation and technology and entrepreneurship. It's a mindset that says we must take an active role in achieving our own destiny. The United States is committed to working closely with our Spanish friends to foster an environment that welcomes and nurtures this growing culture of entrepreneurship.

So as we celebrate the success and the opening of Capital Group's Madrid office, we all can help – and I encourage all of you to think about what you can do to help grow a spirit and culture of entrepreneurship in Spain.

Again, I welcome Capital Group to Spain, and wish you great success here. And now I would like to turn it over to Stephen Gosztory, Chief Executive Director and Senior Vice President at Capital International Limited.

Thank you very much and please enjoy the evening.